



CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

JULY 2004 AGENDA

SUBJECT

Information regarding the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

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Action

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Information

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Public Hearing

RECOMMENDATION

This item is provided to the State Board of Education (SBE) for information only.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION DISCUSSION AND ACTION

The results of the 2002 NAEP Reading Assessment were presented to the SBE in June 2003. Additional information on the 2002 Writing Assessment and Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA), was provided to the SBE as an information memorandum in October 2003. The results of the 2003 NAEP Reading and Mathematics assessments were presented to the SBE in November of 2003.

SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

Some questions have been raised by members of the education community regarding the purpose and results of the NAEP assessments. Issues for discussion will focus on:

- Background and purpose of NAEP;
- Comparisons between NAEP and the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) California Standards Tests (CSTs), including purpose, populations tested, and results.

FISCAL ANALYSIS (AS APPROPRIATE)

This item does not have a fiscal impact.

ATTACHMENT(S)

[Attachment 1](#): The National Assessment of Educational Progress in California
(2 Pages)

The SBE will receive a Last Minute Memorandum that will provide further information for this discussion.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress in California

June 2004

Background

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as "the Nation's Report Card," is the only national assessment of what students across America know and can do in various subject areas. Since 1969, NAEP has conducted assessments periodically in [reading](#), [mathematics](#), [science](#), [writing](#), U.S. history, [civics](#), [geography](#), and [the arts](#).

Under the [current](#) structure of NAEP, the Commissioner of Education Statistics, who heads the [National Center for Education Statistics](#) (NCES) in the U.S. Department of Education, is responsible by law for carrying out the NAEP assessments. The National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB), appointed by the Secretary of Education but independent of the department, governs the program.

NAEP does not provide scores for individual students or schools; instead, it provides results regarding subject-matter achievement, instructional experiences, and school environment for populations of students (e.g., fourth-graders) and subgroups of those populations (e.g., female students, Hispanic students). NAEP results are based on a sample of student populations of interest.

Issue

The California Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program assesses students in grades 2-11 in California public schools, every year. The question naturally arises as to how the results on the STAR assessments compare to those on NAEP. Several factors may contribute to observed differences between NAEP and STAR results. Some initial thoughts are presented below; a more complete analysis will be provided in the presentation to the State Board of Education.

Differences in Frameworks, Standards and Assessments

While the NAEP standards and California academic content standards are similar in many ways, there are differences that result in somewhat different specifications for the assessments. Two examples of how these differences are evident follow below:

- The STAR California Standards Test (CST) in English language-arts (ELA) is aligned with California content standards that are based on a grade-specific scope and sequence for ELA instruction. The NAEP reading assessment is aligned with a general reading framework that reflects common practice across the nation.

- In addition to being based on different frameworks, the NAEP reading assessments use a different mix of multiple-choice and constructed-response items and the California assessments use all multiple-choice items to assess reading.

Different assessments based on different frameworks and standards should not be expected to show the same performance trends, even if both measure the same general content area.

NAEP and the California Standards Tests

Despite the differences between the two tests, comparisons using a common scale show that the NAEP and the assessments included in the STAR Program, the Stanford Achievement Test (Stanford 9) and the California Standards Tests tell very similar stories over the periods where valid comparisons can be made.

- Between 1998 and 2002, progress on the Stanford 9 tests used in the STAR program was found to be very similar to that shown on STATE NAEP for the same period. This was true for students in both grades 4 and 8.
- Between 2002 and 2003, progress on the California Standards Tests in English Language Arts was shown to be comparable to those on NAEP for the same period for grades 4 and 8.
- Progress made in Los Angeles on the CST and NAEP between 2002 and 2003 were shown to be consistent at both grades 4 and 8.

Additional information highlighting the purpose of NAEP and the comparability of NAEP to the California Standards Tests will be provided in the presentation to the State Board of Education.